

ARAKAWA WARD: URBAN GROWTH AND MODERNIZATION

by Hiroshi Wagatsuma and George A. DeVos

THE JAPANESE CITY IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: AN INTRODUCTION

As a fragment of Japanese history, the growth of Arakawa Ward in Tokyo typifies a number of historical and sociological processes evident throughout Japan. We seek here only to sketch briefly the irregular rhythms of population growth that have changed the flood-prone river district north of the Shogun's castle into a densely populated part of north central Tokyo. It is not possible in the present context to explore the social processes in an analytic anthropological framework. But it is obvious that a comparative cross-cultural analysis of city growth is in order and should be conducted. Suffice it to note here that the growth of the Japanese city in sociological terms has differences from that occurring elsewhere. Industrialization in Japan does not simply replicate the processes of industrialization and urbanization found in the United States. For many of its superficial resemblances, Osaka is not Chicago, and Tokyo is not New York. Urban in-migration from the countryside in Japan is quite different from mass foreign immigration at the turn of the twentieth century into the expanding industrial complexes that were the economic base on which American cities grew. Rather, there is a flow and a continuity in Japanese urbanization much different from that of the United States. The city existed before industry—and the life of the city in Japan still shows marked continuity with the life of the small town and the rural farm communities of pre-industrial Japan. Patterns of land ownership, the buying and selling of land, radically affect the type of geographic and social mobility possible within Japanese urban

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culture. One must issue a caveat, therefore, that one cannot simply study the Japanese city in the frame of reference developed by American sociologists concerned with the city in the United States. The city is a psycho-cultural environment in which cultural traditions of the past and the inherited life style of its inhabitants still play a vital role in shaping the direction to be taken by the city life of the people.

Arakawa Ward, a ward of petty merchants and artisans northeast of the center of Tokyo, can be examined as a specific example of urban growth in Japan. The pre-industrial past of Edo gradually shifts into the industrial present of Tokyo. The foot-trodden paths in and out of the capital of the Tokugawa Shogunate have been replaced by the truck-ridden ribbons of concrete extending out from modern Japan's commercial and industrial heart. In this article we seek to trace some of the processes of growth occurring as Edo becomes Tokyo.

THE HISTORY OF THE ARAKAWA

Location

Arakawa is one of the twenty-three wards of present-day Tokyo, located in the northern part of the city about three and a half miles from the Imperial Palace. From an aerial view, one sees the Arakawa River, the largest river in the Tokyo area, winding eastward along the northeast side of the ward. This river, when it turns to flow south, changes its name to the Sumidagawa, and soon empties into Tokyo Bay. Sprinkled along both sides of the Arakawa are large factories with tall smokestacks spewing forth smoke into the generally leaden Tokyo sky. Occupying a wide flat rectangle on the south bank is the largest of Tokyo's three sewage disposal plants, rectangles of bright bluish water that create a colored contrast with the surrounding area. (See maps pp. 208f.)

Five bridges within the ward span the river to the north and east: Odai, Ogu, Otake, Senju, and Shirahige Bridges. They are continually crowded with traffic sluggishly coursing through them from the several wide main streets that, like scars of light beige concrete, crisscross the lumpy masses of dark brown rooftops set in a network of tiny, crooked alleys. On the sides of the wider roads are the shopping districts, with here and there taller buildings of gray concrete.

Descending from this overview, one finds a compact mass of small factories, apartments, and individual houses. The American is certain to be impressed with the smallness and decrepitude of these wooden one- or two-story buildings, which stand so close to each other that practically no air passes between them.

As one becomes aware of more immediate sensations, one may be surprised at the various strange and strong smells—from the crematorium, the sewage plant, the leather factories, and the various piles of rubbish. The intensity and kind of the odors are determined by the district, the season, and the direction of the wind. One also notices little children playing in the narrow, winding alleys. Paper boxes or masses of iron scrap are piled up in front of the houses. People move about in the midst of the harsh din of many small machines. The whole area is a spread-out factory zone, but it serves at the same time as home for thousands of people who live and sleep in rooms they enter through other rooms occupied by machines that work wood, metal, and leather.

Arakawa Ward covers 10.34 square kilometers and is ranked as the third smallest in area among the twenty-three wards of Tokyo. The population in 1965 was 269,745 (72,155 households), fifteenth among the Tokyo wards. Arakawa ranked second in population density with 26,448 people per square kilometer, almost four times the average density of the city as a whole.

Located in Taitō Ward directly to the south are Ueno, famous as a business center and for its public parks and museums, and Asakusa, a well known entertainment area and the site of the former Yoshiwara, the best-known prostitution quarters of premodern Japan. Asakusa, now one of Tokyo's largest amusement areas, caters especially to a lower-class clientele. Authorized houses of prostitution were established and flourished from the early seventeenth century. They continued openly in modern times until 1958, when the enactment of a stringent law prohibiting prostitution finally drove the profession underground, out of the hands of traditional family businesses and into the hands of less traditional, western-style outlaw gangs.

To the southwest of Arakawa, on higher ground, is Bunkyo Ward, predominantly a middle-class professional district with numerous schools and several universities. This ward is characterized by the "Yamanote" style of life, distinct from the merchant "Shitamachi" atmosphere of Arakawa.¹

To the west and north are Kita and Adachi Wards. Kita is a transitional ward, shading down from the higher ground of Bunkyo into the industrial lowlands on the north bank of the Arakawa River. Adachi Ward is more recently settled, less organized, and socially more depressed than Arakawa Ward. Because Adachi is farther from the center of Tokyo, the rents are lower. The factories and houses of Adachi eventually shade into small segments of cultivated farmland.

To the east are the Katsushika-ku and Sumida-ku areas, similar in character to Adachi and Arakawa—somewhat between the two, if such very fine distinctions can be made in levels of impoverished housing.

Today, Arakawa Ward is divided into seven postal administrative districts: East and West Nippori, Minami (South) Senju, Arakawa, Machiya, and East and West Ogu. The characteristics of these districts vary slightly from one to another, reflecting their somewhat divergent histories.

East and West Nippori, to the southwest with a major station on the Yamanote urban rail line, are the only areas with any high ground. The extreme southern portion north of Kan-ei Temple (that is located in the northwestern part of Taitō Ward) used to be considered a prime residential area. But now the housing is interspersed with storage and reworking areas used by reclaimers of rags and other scraps. Waste salvage activities are now gradually being pressed to moved out, through the enforcement of city sanitary regulations requiring a given amount of space between such areas and neighboring residences. Land purchase or rental is too costly to permit acquisition of the legal amount of space by most of these scrap dealers, so their activities are being moved with increasing rapidity into Adachi and Katsushika Wards to the northeast.

Minami Senju, extending to the southeast, has a long history as a night stopover on one of the four major entrances to the city of Edo, the premodern Tokyo. This former stagetown area is now the site of several large factories, many built at the end of the nineteenth century. A large section toward the east is occupied by a national railway trainyard used for the storage and maintenance of electric cars. The rail line has a connecting pier and cargo station on the edge of the river. South of the railyards are Tokyo Gas Company factory and some flophouses called *doyagai* in the northern extension of a large skid row area called *San-ya* of Taitō Ward. This area is predominantly inhabited by day laborers, itinerant peddlers, and unemployed, homeless men. At one time, before government intervention, some of these men lived partially on money gained by selling their blood to blood banks. Tokyo Stadium, principally used for night baseball, squats massively on the west side of a congested major north-south traffic artery that runs across the Senju Big Bridge. From premodern times this was one of the principal roads out of Edo toward the northeastern provinces. The Jōbansen rail line now runs parallel to this old highway, out to the mountain resort area of Nikkō. Between the old road and the rail station are still to be found a sprinkling of tiny restaurants, some of which have been there since the time when travelers on foot would stop over on their way, putting aside their load for food and drink. Also still to be found in this area are a number of old, decaying small temples and shrines that lined the foot-trodden highway. To the east of the railyards are a number of spinning and weaving factories, paper pulp works, and a large natural gas

processing plant, crowded flush against the river bank.

The central Arakawa district is cut through by the main east-west thoroughfare, Meijidōri. The administrative headquarters for the ward, the fire station, the police station, and the ward office are located near a convergence of Meijidōri and several other major streets that cross the ward. Between this central area and the southerly bend of the river are to be found slaughterhouses, a crematorium, a home for stray dogs, and the largest sewage disposal plant of the Tokyo area. Otakebashi Dōri is the major north-south artery running through the central portion of central Arakawa, then through Machiya, the district to the north, crossing the Otake Bridge into Adachi Ward. This thoroughfare is lined by small shops, restaurants, *pachinko* (pinball) parlors, movie theaters, coffee houses, and other minor places for amusement or entertainment. It is one of the three major shopping streets within the ward. One now finds it continually clogged with cars, especially in the area of the bridge. The congestion backs up cars for several blocks.

In the Machiya district, covering the north central section of Arakawa, one finds slightly better housing than in the central Arakawa district. Machiya has the highest resident population density among the seven districts. Here are concentrated carpenters and wood and metal workers. The house-factory with one room for family living and one room to house one or two machines is the chief dwelling type in this area. On the northern edge, on the river bank, one finds larger factories specializing in light and heavy metal-working and wood-working, and the manufacture of charcoal.

East and West Ogu, to the northwest, contain more than a fourth of the area of Arakawa Ward. It is the most recently settled area and has still some scattered plots of land that were used for marginal farming until recent times. A large electrical and chemical plant and some small metal and rubber work factories face the south bank of the river. The houses in this area are like those found in Machiya.

Throughout the district new five-story walk-up concrete apartment buildings are increasing in number. The government has been razing the most dilapidated blocks and replacing their clustered shacks with concrete structures. An interesting innovation in apartment-building construction is the provision made for small house-factories on the ground floor of most of these new structures. On ground level one finds, now in concrete, the one-room factories and small shops with living space in the back. As elsewhere, the balconies of these apartments are used to dry laundry and to air bedding. The sides of the buildings are continually covered with fluttering laundry.

Scattered throughout the ward are nine public and seven private

kindergartens, twenty-seven primary schools, and fifteen public and one private junior high schools, each with its gravel and cement play area. The public schools are under the jurisdiction of the ward as part of the compulsory education system. There are also two public and two private senior high schools and a special pilot navigation training institute. A number of small shrines and temples are maintained as family businesses, affording a bit of greenery in their tiny surrounding gardens.

Arakawa in the Edo Period (1590-1868) during the Tokugawa Shogunate

In 1590, Tokugawa Ieyasu, founder of the Tokugawa regime, selected Edo as the new site of his government. The small castle there, originally constructed by Ōta Dōkan in 1456, was rebuilt and expanded to house the central authority of the new government, which was to have exclusive rule over Japan for nearly three hundred years. As the flat land around the new Edo Castle was too limited for easy expansion, in 1603 Ieyasu ordered the leveling of Kanda Hill to the north of the castle. He used this soil to fill in a section of the bay to the southeast. The city immediately spread over the reclaimed land, which has now become the Nihonbashi-Kyōbashi district of downtown Tokyo. According to a book entitled *Records of My Experiences in Japan*, written by a Spaniard in 1609, the population of Edo at the time was about 150,000. During the Kan-ei Era (1624-1643), under the reign of the third Shogun, Iemitsu, more than three hundred lords of the Daimyo rank established part-time residences in Edo. According to a fiat of "alternate attendance," promulgated in 1635, they were ordered to have their families and a number of retainers remain in these Edo residences while they returned half the year to govern their fiefs. By 1650, the population of Edo had grown to 600,000. The population of London at this time has been estimated at about 200,000, and that of New York at about 50,000.

By the time Ieyasu established Edo as his capital, a number of small rural villages had grown up in the low areas south of the Arakawa River principally in the areas now called Ogu, Machiya, and Arakawa.

In 1590, when Ieyasu occupied the Edo Castle, Edo was less than 2.5 square miles in area. Edo grew rapidly during the seventeenth century, but what is now Arakawa-ku remained a relatively unpopulated and undeveloped marginal agricultural area in the outskirts. Lacking any protective levees, most of the area could readily become flooded with the overflow from the river during a sudden severe storm. Even during an ordinary wet season there were numerous marshes and swamps. Farmlands and rice paddies were tended only on the more favorable rises. The

villages there showed no appreciable growth; expansion was made in more favorable directions.

Arakawa-ku was eventually incorporated within the official boundaries of Edo. By 1765 the city limits extended for a distance of about ten miles from the castle. In 1818, the Tokugawa government made an official map of the city and its environs. The area under the control of the City Magistrate (*machi-bugyō*) was divided into the city proper (*go-fu-nai*) and an outer city. Present Arakawa-ku was for the most part included within what was designated as the city proper.²

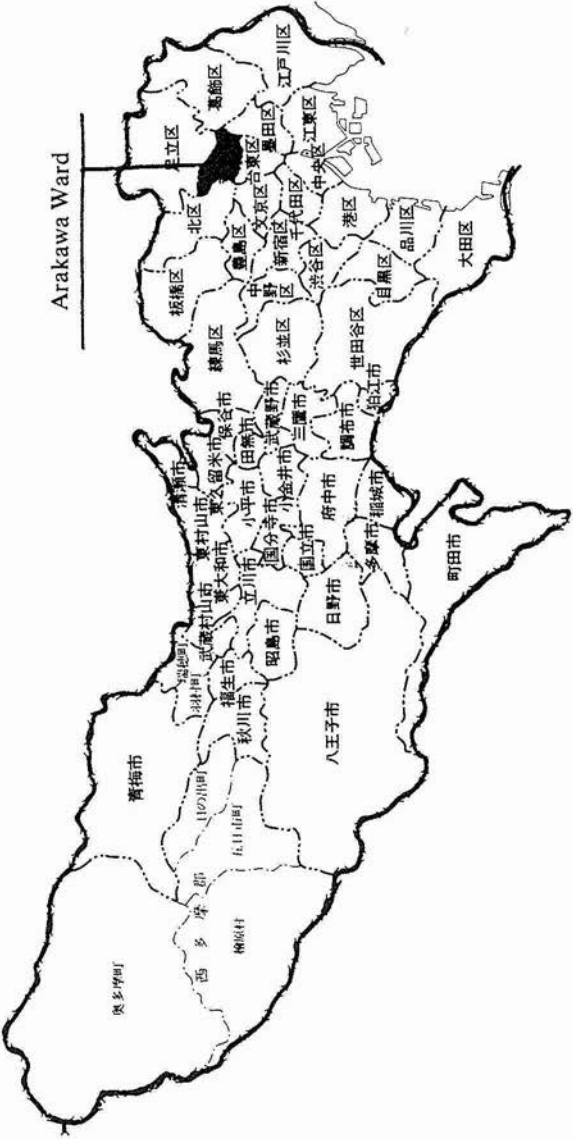
The fires of Edo and the growth of the city³

Edo, the bustling capital of feudal Japan, was known for frequent outbreaks of disastrous fires, which would quickly consume vast areas of its wooden houses. There are records of more than one hundred large fires that burned through several districts during the Tokugawa period. One of the largest recorded was the "furisode kaji," which broke out in 1657. The houses of about five hundred Daimyo and over eight hundred and sixty high-ranking Tokugawa retainers (*hatamoto*), as well as seven hundred houses of other samurai, burned down. Over 107,000 persons were burned to death. What is now Arakawa-ku was at that time still a farming area in the northern outskirts of the city, and was not affected by this fire. But the subsequent fire of September 1698, fanned by a southern wind, spread throughout the district. Another big fire, that of February 1772, also reached deep into Arakawa.

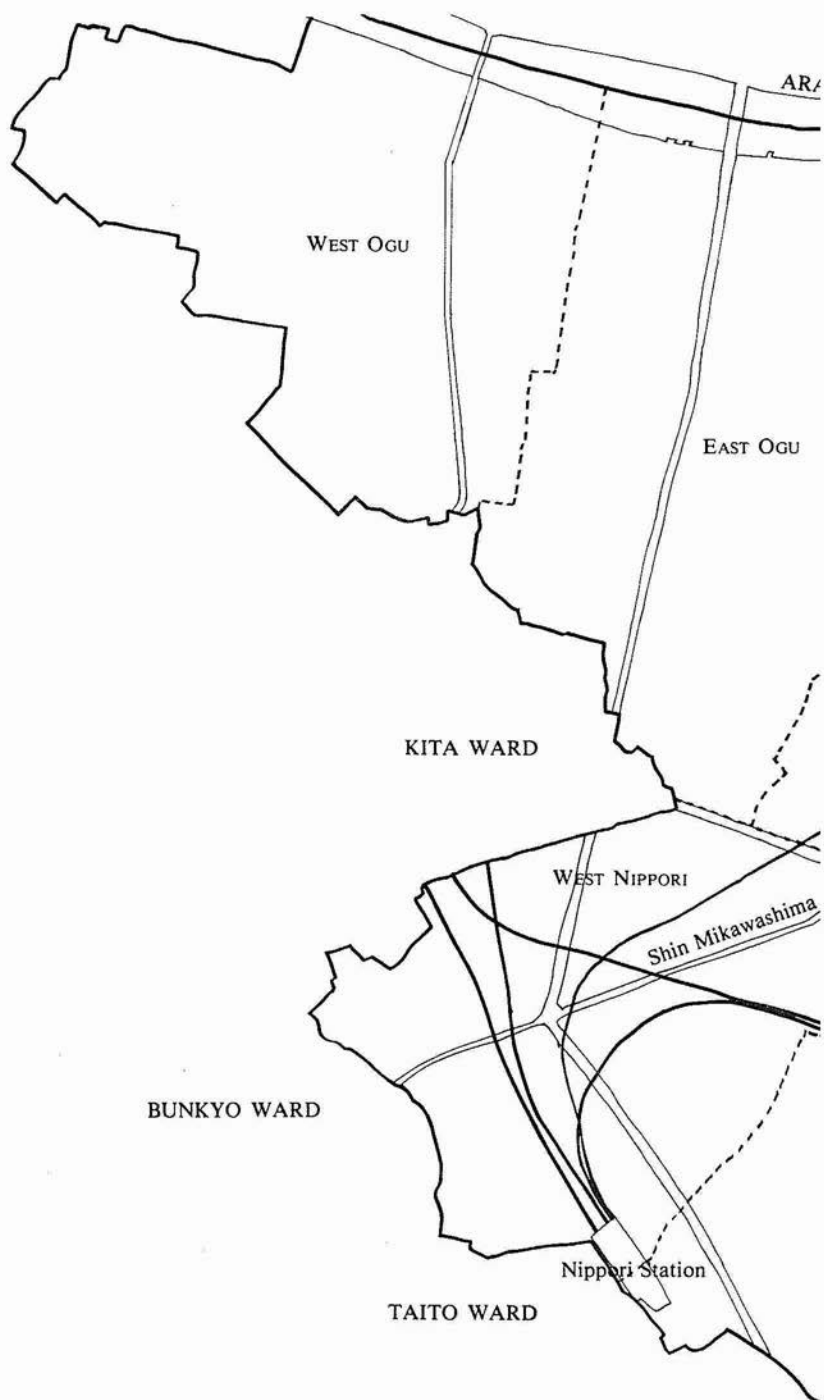
The big fires of Edo were relevant to the development of Arakawa-ku in several respects. After each such catastrophe, farmers around the city (including the Arakawa farmers) enjoyed an increase in income as the price of vegetable produce rose sharply. Also, local inhabitants found extra income as laborers in the clearing up and rebuilding of the city. Moreover, after each such fire, the population of Edo tended to spread out from the central parts farther into the suburbs, and the city districts were reorganized. Often, the fire-ravaged areas were taken over for government use, and their owners were given new land in the outskirts of the city as compensation.

The establishment of Kan-ei Temple and the growth of Arakawa

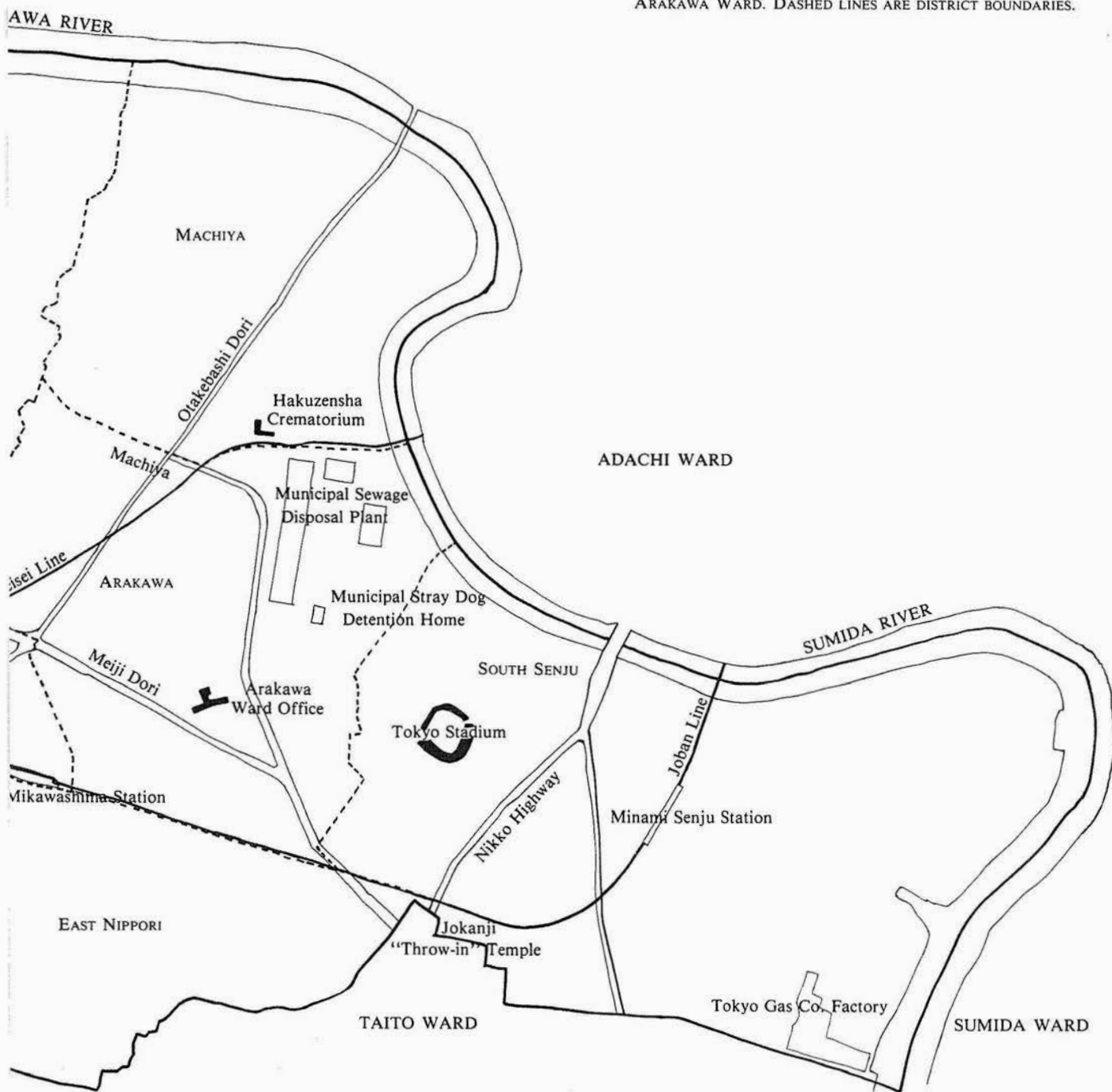
The Tokugawa family, as rulers of Japan, decided to found a temple to compete in importance with that of the Imperial Family in Kyoto. The court traditionally had sponsored the long-respected Enryaku-ji on Mount Hiei, northeast of Kyoto, which in turn served as their special



GREATER TOKYO METROPOLITAN AREA



ARAKAWA WARD. DASHED LINES ARE DISTRICT BOUNDARIES.



protector. In 1625, or the second year of the Kan-ei Era, the second Shogun, Hidetada, established a temple on Ueno Hill which was called Tōeizan Kan-ei-ji.⁴ From the time of the third master of the Kan-ei-ji, the custom was established that a member of the Imperial Family was appointed head master and put in charge of the Enryaku-ji Temple on Mount Hiei and the Tōshōgū Shrine in Nikkō, which entombed the body of Tokugawa Ieyasu. From the time of the sixth master, the head priest also had charge of the Sensō-ji, a famous temple to Kannon (the goddess of mercy) in nearby Asakusa. The expenses incurred in running these important temples were defrayed by income from the farm land given to each temple. In 1719, according to documents, thirty-eight villages and their lands became the property of the Kan-ei-ji. Among these were five villages located in the present Arakawa-ku. These were the settlements of Nippori, Kami-Ogu, Shimo-Ogu, Machiya, and Mikawashima.⁵ From the turn of the seventeenth century until the land was taken from the temple in the Meiji Restoration, a great deal of the present Arakawa-ku belonged to the Kan-ei-ji of Ueno as a temple estate. The remainder belonged directly to the Tokugawa government.

The farmers who lived on the estate of the Kan-ei-ji were granted two privileges. First, they were exempted from the "work duty" enforced on villagers living along highways. One of the main highways out of Tokyo branching into the Ōshūdō and Nikkōdō ran through the eastern part of Arakawa. Farmers not living on the temple estate had to carry luggage and tend horses every time a lord and his retainers travelled along this highway. These services often became a serious burden to the already overworked farmers. Those living on the Kan-ei-ji temple estate were exempted from any such duty. Second, the land tax (paid in rice) of those on the temple estate was 40% of the annual harvest, lighter than that collected in many other areas. For instance, on the land directly governed by the Tokugawa government, the land tax remained 40% of the annual harvest until around 1730, when it was raised to 50%. On lands governed by other feudal lords, the land tax was annually higher, sometimes ranging from 50% to 70%.

In spite of these privileges, however, the life of villagers on the Kan-ei-ji temple estate was not necessarily free from financial difficulty, a chronic condition of peasants in feudal Japan. Their plight is exemplified by a written petition submitted in 1727 to the Kan-ei-ji temple office by fourteen villages, including Machiya Village in Arakawa:

Fifteen villages located along the River Arakawa had all their lands sink under the water at the time of flood in July and a great many farmers had no crop at all. Therefore, we beseeched you for a special favor in regard to the land tax, but your answer was that there would be no change in the rate of

land tax. We further pleaded for your permission to pay the tax in rice that had been submerged at the time of the flood. But you did not allow us to submit such rice in payment. In fact, we would be terribly short of rice, even if we were allowed to use water-soaked rice. We beg you to accept our rice, as it is the crop of your own estate. It is very difficult for us to sell the bad rice⁶ to others and buy better rice to submit to you. . . . It is quite natural that you say we should submit good rice, not bad rice, because the land tax we pay is basically our offering to the honorable spirits and to Buddha. We understand well that we must submit good rice. However, it is not at all possible for us impoverished peasants to do so at present. Please do accept our water-soaked rice. The total rice available is not enough for us to meet the quota, but we will obtain enough rice in order to pay the tax in full, even if we have to kill ourselves. Our villages all go under the water at every flood and damage is always very serious. It is always difficult for us to pay our land tax in full. But we are especially impoverished now and we would ask you to understand our situation.

Similar petitions written in 1789, 1793, and 1866 are kept in the Kan-ei-ji. They attest to the financial difficulties of Arakawa farmers who suffered frequent flood damage.

Nippori as a residential area

The Nippori district of present Arakawa-ku covers both low land and part of the Ueno Hill. The hillside part of Nippori is still covered with Buddhist temples, many established after the foundation of the Kan-ei Temple. Scattered among these temples were a number of Daimyo residences. Commanding a view across the flat land toward the Arakawa River, the area was known for the beautiful scenery created by winter snow-falls. In the spring, a profusion of wild flowers colored the low marshy grounds toward the river. Writers and artists frequented the area. Nippori, written in three Chinese characters, can be pronounced in native Japanese as *hi-gurachi-no-sato*, meaning literally "a rural place to pass a day of leisure." Some of the lands north of Nippori were also used by the Shogun and his retainers for falconry and other types of hunting.

The Northeast Gate to Edo

The eastern portion of present-day Arakawa-ku, called Minami Senju, did not belong to the Kan-ei Temple estate. Minami (South) Senju, together with Kita (North) Senju directly across the river, had settlements that lined one of the four main entrance roads into Edo. In 1601 the Tokugawa government had several main highways constructed, connecting Edo with other parts of Japan. The Senju "Big Bridge" over the Arakawa was built

in 1593. In 1604, the government laid stones along these main thoroughfares, marking each "ri" of distance from Nihon-bashi or Japan bridge (1 ri = 2.445 miles). After 1635, each of the principal feudal lords with his retainers started his annual journey along one of the main highways between his home fief and Edo. The government saw to it that these highways were well maintained. Stages, or stopping towns, each provided a variety of services. Inns, brothels, and gaming houses provided temporary respite from the tedium of travel. The first stopping town on each of five major highways spreading out from Edo was especially important because it provided for a last preparatory stop before official entrance into the capital. The first stop on the best-known route, the Tōkaidō to the southwest, was Shinagawa, now a bustling commercial entertainment center to the south of central Tokyo. Shinjuku, as its name still implies, was the first stage of the Kōshūdō to the west. Itabashi was the first stage on the Nakasendō to the northwest. Senju to the northeast was the first joint stage of the roads to the north and northeast, the Nikkōdō and the Ōshūdō. As indicated in the statistics of 1843 shown below, Senju was the largest in population among these four major stage points and next only to Shinagawa in the number of inns available to accommodate travelers (see table I).

TABLE I
THE POPULATION OF THE PRINCIPAL POST TOWNS
ON THE HIGHWAYS OUT OF EDO IN 1843

STAGE	POPULATION	MALE	FEMALE	HOUSES
SHINAGAWA	6,890	3,272	3,618	1,561
SENJU	9,956	5,005	4,551	2,370
ITABASHI	2,448	1,053	1,395	573
SHINJUKU	2,377	1,172	1,205	689

INNS

STAGE	LARGE	MEDIUM	SMALL	TOTAL	HONJIN*	WAKI-HONJIN*
SHINAGAWA	9	66	18	93	1	2
SENJU	12	34	17	63	1	0
ITABASHI	35	12	7	54	1	3
SHINJUKU	14	0	12	26	1	1

*Honjin, 'headquarters,' was a large inn of considerable prestige and wealth, which could adequately accommodate a high-ranking feudal lord. Waki-Honjin, 'sub-headquarters,' was a large inn subordinate in prestige and wealth to Honjin. The traveling lords stayed in either Honjin or Waki-Honjin according to their rank. When two lords happened to stay at the same stopping town, the one with higher rank stayed at the Honjin and the other with lower rank stayed at the Waki-Honjin even if his rank qualified him to stay at the Honjin when he had no competitor. The reason for the additional Waki-Honjin in Itabashi is not clear.

The inns (in the stage towns) were serviced by prostitutes, usually termed *meshi-mori-onna* (rice-serving-woman) or, more crudely, *shukuba jorō* (stage whore). In the beginning these prostitutes were not licensed, but as their number increased the government decided officially in 1718 that each inn could keep two licensed "rice-serving women." This was, however, too small a number to meet the steadily increasing demand of travelers, especially in those stages close to the entrance to Edo. The owners of inns therefore repeatedly filed petitions requesting permission to increase the number of licensed prostitutes each could keep. In 1763, the government finally allowed a quota of 500 women for Shinagawa and 150 each for Senju and Itabashi. With so many prostitutes present, the stage towns came more and more to take on the appearance of licensed prostitution quarters, and were visited not only by actual travelers but by regular Edo citizens. The center area of the Senju Stage was located just north of the Senju Ōhashi. It contained the headquarters of stage officials and the principal inns and stables. Minami Senju was filled mostly with smaller inns and the stores of merchants. In his famous travel record, *Oku-no Hosomichi* (A Small Path in the Hinterlands), one of the greatest *haiku* poets of Tokugawa Japan, Matsuo Bashō, described his departure by way of the Senju Stage:

(On March 27, 1689) a wan morning moon lost its brightness and Mount Fuji became faintly visible. Wondering whether and when I would again see the cherry blossoms of Yanaka in Ueno, I felt forlorn. Close friends of mine had gathered this last evening and came with me by boat to see me off. Getting off the boat at the place called Senju, a lump came into my throat at the thought of the long journey I was to make . . .

Yuku haru ya
Tori naki
Uo no me ni namida

Spring departs,
Birds crying
Tears in eyes of fish.

Senju was not only the stopping town for travelers on the Nikkōdō and Ōshūdō highways but also a place for disembarking passengers and cargoes coming by boat along the Arakawa. For those who are familiar with the present Arakawa River, full of stinking sewage and trash, it is difficult to imagine that not long ago it was a beautiful, wide, slow-flowing stream with clear water abundant with fish.

During the Tokugawa period, the river was an important transportation route. The products of the Kawagoe area in the north Kantō Plain—lumber, firewood, charcoal, tea and silk, in addition to vegetables—were carried into Edo on boats. The navigable water course began near the town of Kawagoe. From there it followed the Shin-Kashi River (actually an artificial canal made by expanding a natural river bed) to the Arakawa, into which the canal flowed, and finally to the point near

where the river changes its name to the Sumidagawa. The entire river course traveled by boats was about ninety miles. It is recorded that it took both passenger and cargo boats more than twenty days to make a leisurely return trip along this waterway. Since passengers stayed on board both day and night, a passenger boat was called a Kawagoe *yo-bune* (night boat). The boat was laboriously poled for much of the course up and down the river. The destination for most passengers was the Senju "Big Bridge." The river traffic lasted for nearly three hundred and fifty years, only to lose its importance and its passengers to the new railroad built at the close of the nineteenth century. The cargo route finally died when the office buildings and storehouses, as well as the boats of the shipping agencies, burned down in the Great Earthquake of 1923.

The use of the Arakawa area as a place of disposal

Yoshiwara, "the field of reeds," was the most notorious prostitution quarters of feudal Edo. It was established in 1657 in the midst of rice paddies and swamp immediately to the south of present Arakawa-ku. The brothels that had been hitherto located near Nihonbashi were suddenly ordered to move to this northern district. For over two hundred and eighty years Yoshiwara represented the Japanese cultural attitude toward the commercialization of sex. While Arakawa Ward benefited little from its proximity to Yoshiwara, it shared in the misery hidden beneath the surface of life in the quarters. In Minami Senju, almost on the ward boundary, not very far from the former Yoshiwara, one still finds a small temple called the Jōkan-Ji. During the Tokugawa period this temple was known as the *Nagekomi-dera* (the throw-in temple) or *Muen-dera* (temple for the unrelated) because it accepted the bodies of dead prostitutes of Yoshiwara and provided cremation and funerals for them. Many prostitutes, sold in their early youth to the Yoshiwara brothels from rural districts, died without leaving anyone to take care of their remains. There was a belief in Yoshiwara that if one laid a prostitute to rest like a respectable human being, she would come back to haunt him. The dead body of a prostitute was wrapped in a straw mat and treated like the body of a dead animal. It became a custom to throw straw-wrapped corpses of prostitutes into the yard of the Jōkan-Ji. Bonzes of this temple would cremate the body and bury the ashes in the temple graveyard. It is said that the ashes of nearly ten thousand prostitutes are buried there. There are also two less frequently used "throw-in" temples outside Arakawa-ku, the Saijō-ji and the Daion-ji, found in present day Taitō Ward to the south.

The great earthquake of October 1855 shook the entire city of Edo, particularly the Yoshiwara area, and caused severe damage. It began

around ten o'clock at night. Fires broke out throughout the area, throwing the prostitution quarters into utter confusion. Many began screaming and looking for places of refuge. Many brothels were equipped with underground storage areas to protect their property in case of fire. Some prostitutes voluntarily hid in these basements to avoid the fire. Brothel owners who were afraid that their women might run away in the confusion forced others to go down into these storage cellars; most of the women who did so were burned to death. Over a thousand prostitutes lost their lives in the catastrophe. The number of dead bodies brought to the Jōkan Temple at this time was counted at five hundred twenty-six.

Kozukappara, the Execution Site

A more important "disposal" function of Arakawa during the Tokugawa Era, which was to give this section of Tokyo its reputation as the garbage bin of Tokyo, was the establishment of the official execution site in Minami Senju around the middle of the seventeenth century, at about the same time as the opening of the Yoshiwara quarters. The site was Kozuka-hara or, more commonly, Kozukappara.

In Minami-Senju, near Tokyo Stadium, one still finds a shrine dedicated to Susanoo-no-Mikoto (the younger brother of Amaterasu-Ōmikami, the Sun Goddess). As is true for a number of Shinto shrines, it hid a luminous stone, called *zuikō* (propitious light), of *kei-seki* (fluorite). An elementary school on the other side of the Stadium was named originally after the stone and called *Zuikō Elementary School*. The mound in which the stone was found was originally called *ko-zuka* (old mound) and the character for *ko* was then changed into another, meaning "small." The field around the mound came to be called Kozuka-hara (the field with a small mound), and became known during Tokugawa times as the site of executions.

The execution grounds were used by the government to behead, crucify, or burn criminals sentenced to death. The place was also used to display the cut-off heads of criminals so sentenced. By 1868 these grounds are said by some reports to have witnessed the execution of more than 200,000 individuals, among them such a legendary thief as Nezumi Kozō Jirokichi and the well-known anti-Tokugawa patriots, Yoshida Shōin and Hashimoto Sanai. The permanent closing of this execution site was one of the first acts of the new Meiji government.

Close to the Minami Senju Station on the national railway are both a small temple and an outdoor wayside *jizō*. This big temple is a branch of a large temple in Asakusa, named *Ekō-in* (Temple of the Requiem for

the Dead). This branch, also called *Ekō-in*, was built in 1662 on the burial grounds for dead travelers, as well as for those who died in prison or were executed. It is known for its many tombs of anti-Tokugawa patriots, many of whom tried to undermine the Edo Government in order to restore the power of the Imperial Family. A large number were killed at the Kozuka-hara execution site. Wayside *Jizō*, or Bodhisattva, are more commonly known as guardian deities of children; but the *Jizō* near the Ekō-in Temple is called *Kubi-Kiri-Jizō* (*Jizō* for the beheaded) and was made in 1741 by several local inhabitants who wanted to memorialize and console the souls of "criminals" killed at the Kozuka-hara execution site.

The crematorium

At about the same time the execution site was established, cremating facilities of more than twenty temples located in Asakusa and Shitaya to the south were consolidated and moved to Minami Senju in 1669.⁷ The place was called the Kasō-ji or the "cremating temples." This was the forerunner of the present large crematorium⁸ for which Arakawa-ku has been known to Tokyo citizens for many years. Around the execution site developed a settlement of outcastes, or *hinin*,⁹ who worked on or near the site. Two *hinin* would hold the criminal while he was beheaded by a warrior official. *Hinin* also stabbed the bodies of crucified criminals with rusty spears, and finally disposed of the bodies of the executed. *Hinin* also were employed at the cremating temple. Dwellings of *eta*, another outcaste group, were also located nearby, for the most part on the north bank of the river. It is believed that *hinin* generally dispersed after their emancipation in the early modern period, although some continued to live in Arakawa. A good many became rag and scrap pickers. As has been mentioned, there are today a large number of leather workers and rag and scrap pickers living in Arakawa-ku.

Arakawa after 1868

From the very first days of the Meiji Period (1868-1912), the government designated Arakawa Ward as the site of modern factory development. A large wool-weaving factory was established under government auspices in Minami Senju in 1879. The Tokyo Cardboard Manufacturing Company, using waste paper, was located there in 1888. Leather-working factories were established, and increased use of meat as well as leather made more slaughterhouses necessary. Their presence made Arakawa a natural site for a new sewage disposal center. The site

was selected in 1908 and the center actually established in 1923. Arakawa on the whole had remained largely agricultural until the beginning of the twentieth century, but after 1900 it rapidly took on its character as a "city dump" for processing waste products of modern Tokyo. Exodus of slum dwellers from central parts of Tokyo increased, especially after the disastrous fires of 1907 and 1923. Early industrialization saw the establishment of countless tiny home-factories, operated by families who under sub-contracts would cut out wood, leather, paper, and metal products on small machines. Many of these families were part of the waves of newcomers from farms who were steadily increasing the size of the new commercial-industrial heart of Japan.

The government woolen factory founded in the middle of rice paddies in Minami Senju in 1879 was part of one of Japan's first industrializing programs. It was a red-brick building, designed by a Frenchman and occupying 7.35 acres (now the site of the Tokyo Baseball Stadium). The factory had its own electric generator and the building was lit with electric bulbs. It employed more than one hundred workers. Privately owned large-scale industry was introduced into the Minami Senju area of Arakawa-ku early in the twentieth century. The Tokyo Woolen Weaving Company was established in 1906, and the Japan Cotton Spinning Company in 1909. To furnish more electricity, a transformer substation of the Tokyo Electric Company was established in Ogu in 1912.

In spite of the early introduction of big factories, Arakawa did not further develop into a large-scale industrial district as did Shinagawa and Ōta Wards to the south of central Tokyo. Instead it was to be characterized by very small-scale factories and workshops. Leather industry developed near slaughterhouses and became more important as shoes replaced *zōri* (straw footwear). The slaughtering industry itself became increasingly important, to provide not only leather but also meat, an item of diet previously prohibited to Japanese under the dietary restrictions of Buddhism. To eat meat became increasingly popular as a symbol of modernity and Westernization. The first large-scale slaughterhouse was built in 1871 on the site of the former government execution grounds, Kozukappara. A second was opened in Ogu to the west in 1890. In 1886 a large butchering and meat company moved into Minami Senju and in 1893 it built its own slaughterhouse. A fairly large leather factory was built near the Mikawashima Station in 1883, and a second in 1887. Establishment of these slaughterhouses and leather factories invited more individual leather workers to move into Ogu, Arakawa, and Minami Senju from Asakusa to the south, where they had previously lived. Many of the leather workers who moved into Arakawa in the early Meiji era must have been direct descendants of former *eta*.

The "cremating temple" of Tokugawa times near the Kozukappara execution site changed its name in 1887 to that of a general crematorium, *yaki-ba* or "burning place." By then this area had already been surrounded by ordinary houses as a result of the rapid development of the Minami Senju township, with convenient transportation into the central part of Tokyo. Residents filed petitions asking for a closing-down of the "burning place." In 1887 it was closed down, and a new crematorium, called *kasō-ba*, was established instead in Nippori. From there it was moved in 1904 to Machiya, where it now stands on the north side of the Keisei Rail Line. As its site was always within Arakawa-ku, the crematorium became strongly associated with the name Arakawa in the minds of Tokyo citizens. Working at crematoria was traditionally a job for *hinin*, but there is no way of knowing now whether the present workers include the descendants of this former outcaste group.

Agricultural Arakawa

From the statistics taken in the two censuses of 1872 and 1874, the population of Arakawa in the early Meiji period was somewhat above 12,000. It was to become over 75,000 by 1919, and nearly six million by 1952. The size of farming lands reported in the 1874 figures attests to the agricultural nature of Arakawa Ward at that time (see table II). In Tokugawa times Mikawashima was known for its Japanese green cabbage, *na*; Ogu for its green vegetables, *kyō-na*, and horseradish, *daikon*; and Nippori for its ginger, *shōga*.

The influx of slum-dwellers

Prevalence of poverty and low-income population, one of the major characteristics of Arakawa, began in 1907 when the government issued an order to move all the poor (then called *sai-min*) who lived in hovels from other parts of Tokyo, especially Shitaya and Asakusa, into the East Nippori and Arakawa districts. The city government built low-rent, cheap "apartment" units in long wooden buildings called *nagaya*, or "long houses," in the south and central areas of Arakawa. In 1909, *tonneru nagaya*, "tunnel long houses," some of which have been inhabited until recently, were built throughout Minami Senju. In 1910, in Nippori, the government built barracks, called "*majinai*" *nagaya*, "magic" long houses, for some pejorative reason. In 1911, one hundred units were built in Minami Senju, and in 1912, one hundred additional units in Nippori. In Minami Senju in 1916 and in East Nippori and Arakawa in 1918, an additional thousand units apiece were built. As the

TABLE II
POPULATION AND AGRICULTURAL LAND IN ARAKAWA

A. Population in 1872¹

DISTRICT: (AS PRESENTLY CALLED)	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS	MEN	WOMEN	TOTAL
Minami Senju	1,133	2,469	2,570	5,039
Arakawa and Machiya	298	817	802	1,619
Ogu (East and West)	271	771	826	1,597
Nippori (East and West)	1,125	2,269	2,257	4,526
TOTAL	2,827	6,326	6,455	12,781

B. Population and Farm Land in 1874³

DISTRICT	POPULATION	RICE PADDY (APPROXIMATELY)	DRY LAND FARM
Minami Senju	4,859	265.7 acres	119.0 acres
Arakawa and Machiya	1,605	285.3	153.8
Ogu (East and West)	1,582	325.5	181.3
Nippori (East and West)	4,192	114.7	148.5
TOTAL	12,237		

¹ Taken from Census, 1872.

² There were some boundary changes and name changes in administrative districts. We are using the present names to avoid confusion.

³ Taken from Census, 1874. The reason for the population decrease by 544 individuals from 1872 to 1874 is unknown. There seems no external reason to explain it.

poor flowed into Arakawa from various parts of Tokyo to live in these "long houses," the population of Arakawa rose at an ever-increasing rate (see table III).

Arakawa itself was badly hit in the Great Earthquake and Fire of 1923. The increase of low-income population received a sudden acceleration after this disaster. The Tokyo Municipal government built a number of barracks in Arakawa to house the poor who had lost their homes in other parts of Tokyo. Many more "long houses" were added to Arakawa, such as the "*kojiki*" *nagaya* ("beggars' long houses") in Mikawashima and "*buta*" *nagaya* ("pigs' long houses") in Ogu. These public projects increased the immigration of rag-scrap pickers, tinkers and repairers of shoes, umbrellas, or geta. By 1926 Nippori became a large collecting and distributing point of waste materials, and a quantity

TABLE III
POPULATION INCREASE IN VARIOUS DISTRICTS OF ARAKAWA

DATE	MINAMI SENJU	ARAKAWA AND MACHIYA	EAST & WEST OGU	EAST & WEST NIPPORI	TOTAL
1908	17,021	3,164	2,035	8,751	30,971
1909	18,290	3,613	2,086	9,610	33,599
1910	20,876	4,324	2,636	12,125	39,961
1911	21,861	4,756	2,583	13,257	42,464
1912	22,800	5,847	2,654	17,185	48,986
1913	23,992	6,552	2,928	19,768	53,240
1914	25,886	8,046	3,028	20,180	57,138
1915	33,739	9,078	2,901	23,783	69,510
1916	34,853	10,810	3,213	27,443	76,319
1917	35,785	10,989	3,422	29,878	75,199

of the paper and rags collected by the Nippori scrap pickers was even exported to foreign countries. In 1923, there was a total of 247 dealers who bought waste materials from pickers. They organized a cooperative and built a large disinfecting center to treat the collected waste products. At present this industry is moving out of Arakawa, farther away from central Tokyo into Adachi Ward.

Increase of small-scale factories in Arakawa

The Great Earthquake and Fire of 1923 contributed greatly to the development of present characteristics of Arakawa-ku. Before the earthquake, Arakawa's population had more or less concentrated in Minami Senju and Nippori. Afterwards, however, the increased population spread more or less evenly over the entire district. Completion of the Arakawa Drainage Canal in 1924 solved the previous problem of sporadic flooding. Improvement of land conditions opened up the possibility of new housing areas. In the forty-year period from 1870 to 1910, the river had overflowed eleven times. In August 1910 a flood covered almost the entire Arakawa district, resulting in a decision by the government to build a drainage canal, now called the Arakawa Hōsui-Ro, 88 kilometers in length. Construction began in 1913 and, fourteen years after its inception, was completed in 1924. It cost a total of 53,140,000 yen, a tremendous sum considering the value of yen at that time. While the canal was being built, the Arakawa district suffered two additional floods; but since 1924, the canal has successfully prevented further water damage. Although the land became secure from damage, its price remained relatively low, compared to other areas of Tokyo. The

Tokyo population, which had by then reached the saturation point in the more central parts of the city, began flowing in increasingly large numbers into Arakawa. The population increased by more than 100,000 between 1923 and 1930 (from 173,000 to 280,600). In addition to the slum dwellers who flowed into Arakawa, small-scale factories and workshops appeared in greater numbers. In 1917, the total number of factories reported, excluding the government-owned woolen mill, was 88. Of these 88 factories, 56, or 63.6%, employed fewer than thirty workers. These small-scale factories rapidly increased in number. By 1927 there were 275; by 1931, 335. These small-scale industries depended additionally upon the cheap labor of nearby housewives, performing part-time piecemeal work called *naishoku*. The *naishoku* system formed an interdependent relationship between slum dwellers and factories. In 1931, with a reorganization of administrative units, Arakawa was unified as a ward with its own headquarters, marking another epoch in its development. From then on there was increasing prosperity after the depression of 1930. With the Manchuria Incident of 1931, exports increased, stimulating industry in Arakawa, as elsewhere. By 1935 there were in Arakawa 1,279 registered factories, the largest number in any of the Tokyo wards. Of these, 95% employed fewer than thirty workers, and 57% fewer than five workers. In production output and number of workers, Arakawa ranked sixth among the Tokyo wards.

Arakawa and World War II

Arakawa was heavily bombed during March and April 1945, and about two-thirds of the residential and industrial areas were burned out (see table IV).

Between November 1944 and August 1945, 772 individuals were killed, 541 severely wounded, and 3,411 slightly wounded during air raids. Those residential areas that escaped bombing became extremely overcrowded immediately after the war. The pre-war barracks in these surviving blocks were inhabited by the especially poor, and crime and delinquency rates quickly mounted. Arakawa became known as an area of acute social disorganization with attendant social deviance and crime. In spite of an increase in social problems, there was considerable economic recovery, which has been almost continuous to the present day. Small-scale industry in Arakawa reappeared after World War II.

By 1948, 2,015 factories were registered, whereas before the war the vast majority were house factories run by families. In this year 72% of the factories in Arakawa were operated by fewer than five workers. Ninety percent employed fewer than ten workers. Only 0.5% employed

TABLE IV
WAR CASUALTIES AND BUILDING DESTRUCTION
IN ARAKAWA DISTRICTS

A. War Casualties in Arakawa

DISTRICT	POPULATION	DIED	WOUNDED	MISSING	HOUSES	
					TOTAL NUMBER	NUMBER DESTROYED
Minami Senju	58,218	250	1,299	100	8,968	14,000
Arakawa and Machiya	37,198	47	102	480	4,389	6,000
Nippori	58,113	36	33	---	2,924	11,000
Ogu	19,533	13	25	---	1,150	-----

B. Destruction of Buildings in Arakawa

	RESIDENCE	STORE	FACTORY	STOREHOUSE	OTHERS	TOTAL
Number of buildings before bombing:	22,656	8,757	1,697	796	70	33,976
Number burned down:	17,899	7,255	1,201	591	54	27,000
Number remaining:	4,757	1,502	496	205	16	6,976
Percentage of loss:	79%	82%	70%	74%	77%	70%

more than a hundred workers. Nearly 70% of all factories were operated by family members with no outsiders employed. While the total number of Arakawa factories constituted 11% of all the factories in Tokyo, the total production value constituted less than 6% of the entire production output of Tokyo industry.¹⁰

The unemployed: Poverty and social welfare

Arakawa Ward houses not only Japan's bankrupt-prone marginal entrepreneurs, but also many hand-to-mouth daily laborers and the unemployed. Although improving its relative position, the Arakawa district remains an area of high priority for the welfare agencies serving

metropolitan Tokyo. According to the 1926 statistics, 56% of the slum dwellers in Tokyo were living in Arakawa. The statistics suggest a low diffusion of welfare cases into other lower class areas. By 1932, of the total 116,045 households in 35 wards on government relief, 13,337 (11.5%) were located in Arakawa. Arakawa still topped the list, followed by Honjo, Fukagawa, Taito, Mukojima, and Asakusa in that order. In 1933 Arakawa-ku topped the relief rolls of individuals on welfare. Of the total of 478,636 individuals on relief in Tokyo, 52,933 were in Arakawa-ku. In 1937 Arakawa had the highest rate of infectious diseases, such as dysentery and infant diarrhea, of all the wards in Tokyo.

Much relative improvement has been made in the living conditions of people in Arakawa in the following forty years. Although the ward is still poorer than most of the other Tokyo wards, it no longer is the poorest. By 1955 Arakawa had the third highest infantile mortality rate (3.2%) and the fourth highest welfare recipient rate (3.5%). The delinquency rate, however, was in this period the highest in Tokyo. In the following ten years it maintained its position as a poor ward. Recent statistics on welfare relief put Arakawa third highest, after Adachi and Itabashi. The poverty-stricken are drifting further north into the peripheral areas of Adachi Ward, or semirural southern Saitama prefecture outside the Tokyo boundaries.

Further changes: Arakawa as a white-collar bedtown

Tokyo is continuously changing. Its subway systems are becoming more and more intricate, with elaborate underground "promenades" and shopping arcades at many stations. As they are not affected by the traffic congestion on the roads, the subway networks provide the citizens with much faster transportation than can be provided by buses or streetcars. Tokyo is also expanding upwards. Skyscrapers, housing offices and hotels, are increasing in number. Particularly visible are the ever-growing condominiums (called "mansion" in Japanese) buildings that are replacing smaller, independent houses.

Arakawa Ward is also changing. In the early 1970s, the extension of the Chiyoda Subway Line went through the West Nippori, Arakawa, and Machiya Districts on its way to Kita Senju and further north. The Hibiya Subway Line reached the Minami Senju District. They connected Arakawa Ward directly to the central parts of Tokyo and were to bring into it an essential change: the ward is now suitable as the residence of white collar workers who commute to their offices in downtown Tokyo. Apartments and condominiums are making their appearances and their residents will bring the Yamanote atmosphere into what originally was a

Shitamachi area. With the influx of middle-class families, the poorer former residents, the rag-pickers and minute-scale workshop operators among them are moving out into the neighboring Adachi and Katsushika Wards. The "cleaning up" processes, which had begun in the early 1960s, of this once poverty-dominated ward have picked up speed and the Arakawa Ward has begun to change into a white-collar "bedtown."

As of 1976, the population of Arakawa was 207,890 (the figure decreased by 61,855 since 1965), and it is now the eighteenth (rather than the fifteenth as in 1965) among the twenty-three Tokyo wards. In population density Arakawa ranks fifth (rather than second as in 1965), with 20,105 people per square kilometer.

In several years to come, we can expect to witness the completion of some substantial changes. How they will happen and what they will be are of considerable interest and importance to the students of urbanization processes. Additional pages to this brief history of Arakawa Ward should be written then.

NOTES

This article is a by-product of a research project on fifty urban lower-income Japanese families, 31 of whom had a delinquent child 13 to 15 years old. The psycho-cultural analysis of these families will be presented in the volume now in preparation, *The Heritage of Endurance*, by Hiroshi Wagatsuma and George A. DeVos. The volume does not contain this article.

1. For an excellent description of different life styles in Yamanote and Shitamachi, see Ronald Dore, *City Life in Japan: A Study of a Tokyo Ward* (University of California Press, 1958), pp. 11-13.

2. The city proper included: Minami Shinagawa, Ōsaki, Yoyogi, Tsunohazu, Narukozaka, Totsuka, Nagasaki, Itabashi, Takinogawa, Funakata, *Ogu*, *Machiya*, *Mikawashima*, *Kozukahara*, *Senju*, Sudachō, Kinoshita-mura, Kinoshita-kawa-mura, Kameido, Konagi, and Ogishinden. The outer city included: Shimo-Takanawa, Shirogane-dai-machi, Meguro, Shibuya, Sendagaya, Kashiwagi, Takada, Zōshigaya, Sugamo, Komagome, Yanaka, Sakamoto, *Minowa*, *Hashiba*, Koume, and Sarue. The places now within Arakawa-ku are in italics.

3. The primary source for this section is *Arakawa-ku-shi* (History of Arakawa Ward) (Arakawa Ward Office, 1936).

4. The name signifies a temple founded in the era of Kan-ei on a mountain, "Tōei-zan," to be considered an eastern counterpart of Mount Hiei.

5. In Arakawa Ward, south of Arakawa district, there used to be an area called Mikawashima, whose name remains in the railway station on the Jōban Line. According to legend, the name Mikawashima originated when Ieyasu gave some higher ground in this area to some of his lower-ranking retainers. These lower samurai had followed him to Tokyo from the land of Mikawa, the original home of the Tokugawa clan. After heavy rains, this elevated rise must have looked like an island rising out of the surrounding swamps. Ac-

cordingly, it came to be known as Mikawa-shima, or "Mikawa Island."

6. Water-soaked rice, or *mizu-iri-mai*, was considered to have a poor taste.

7. The custom of cremation came to Japan with Buddhism. The first documented case of cremation was that of a Buddhist saint in A.D. 700. Already in Nara Period (A.D. 646-793) emperors were cremated, and in the Heian Period (A.D. 794-893) the custom spread among the court nobles. Burial without cremation is still found only infrequently in some rural areas.

8. The location within Arakawa Ward was twice changed, once to Nippori and then to Machiya, the present site.

9. As regards *hinin* and *eta*, see George DeVos and Hiroshi Wagatsuma, eds., *Japan's Invisible Race* (University of California Press, 1966).

10. For the life patterns and economic conditions of the small-scale factory operators, see Hiroshi Wagatsuma and George DeVos, "The Entrepreneurial Mentality of Lower Class Urban Japanese in Manufacturing Industries," in G. A. DeVos, ed., *Socialization for Achievement* (University of California Press, 1973), chapter 8, pp. 201-219; and Hiroshi Wagatsuma, "Pencil Making in a Tokyo Ward," in Gianni Fedella, ed., *Social Structure and Economic Dynamics in Japan up to 1970* (Milan: Institute of Economic and Social Studies for East Asia, Luigi Bocconi University, 1975), pp. 146-165.